

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities Annual Report Fiscal Year 2014



Message from the Director

These are very exciting and busy times at the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD). In preparation for this, our 6th Annual Report, we reflect on the wonderful work of the Center and recognize our many outstanding accomplishments and achievements.

NCBDDD continues to do wonderful work making a difference across the lifespan, which is evidenced through the execution of our four focus areas:

- Saving Babies Through Birth Defects Prevention and Research
- Helping Children Live to the Fullest by Understanding Developmental Disabilities like Autism
- Protecting People and Preventing Complications of Blood Disorders, and
- Improving Health of People with Disabilities



These focus areas exemplify the sustained need to protect those who are vulnerable to health risks, such as babies, children, people with blood disorders, and people with disabilities. And this year, to further our focus area work, we have increased our efforts to advance the NCBDDD's public health impact by promoting three key action areas, uniquely known as *Strategic Health Initiatives*: Safer Medication Use in Pregnancy, Preventing Health Care Associated Venous Thromboembolism (VTE), and Aligning Practice with Treatment Guidelines for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Young Children.

Each initiative represents the melding of public health and health care with a goal of improving health of at risk populations through evidence-informed/based health care.

The strategic health initiatives serve to catalyze medical and professional organizations, health care systems, federal agencies, and public and private sector organizations toward action-- and this work is only just beginning.

Prevention is key and the heartbeat of our initiatives. We know that many doctors and women face uncertainty about using medication during pregnancy. Safer medication use in pregnancy will lead to healthier pregnancies and healthier babies through better research, reliable guidance, and informed decisions. We know that 70% of health care associated VTEs are preventable and that evidence based interventions will reduce the number of post-surgical patients who die from blood clots. We also know that experts agree families of young children with ADHD should be referred to behavioral therapy as first-line treatment. Realignment of current practices will, lead to more U.S. children who grow healthy, reach their full potential, and live a productive adult life.

I am deeply grateful to our dynamic staff members who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of individuals and families living with birth defects, blood disorders, or disabilities; these remarkable individuals offer direction to the Center, many of whom are guided by their own life experiences. With that passion, we will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders to sustain and enhance the impact of our programs and resource base. We have much to be proud of and we will continue to build on this solid foundation to raise achievements in the coming years.

Thank you for your continued efforts and interest in NCBDDD.
Sincerely,



Coleen A. Boyle, PhD, MS(Hyg)
Director of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD)

To view the annual report online, please visit:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/aboutus/annualreport2014>

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